



Fight The Bite

Mississippi Child Care Facilities

The Mississippi Department of Health urges all Mississippians to avoid mosquito bites whenever possible. The risk of a healthy person getting West Nile virus from a mosquito bite is very low, but protection remains important for everyone.

Everyone should know . . .

- West Nile virus is transmitted *primarily* through the bite of an infected mosquito. However, there have been isolated cases occurring in blood transfusions and organ donation recipients, from mother to baby during pregnancy, and through breast milk. People cannot become infected through ordinary contact with an infected bird, horse or human.
- No vaccine exists to protect humans against West Nile virus. Individuals must personally ***Fight The Bite***.

A Message For Parents/Guardians & Child Care Facility Attendees:

- Avoid mosquitoes whenever possible.
- Stay indoors or take personal protective measures, especially between dusk and dawn.
- Use mosquito repellent with DEET (concentrations up to 30 percent for adults and 10 percent or less for children two years to 12 years of age, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics).
- According to the CDC, most guidelines cite that it is acceptable to use repellents containing DEET on children over two years of age. Other experts suggest that it is acceptable to apply repellent with low concentrations of DEET to infants over two months old. For children less than two years of age, parents should consult their pediatrician.
- Do not allow young children to apply repellents to themselves. Apply repellent to your own hands and then put it on the child. Avoid children's eyes and mouth and use it sparingly around their ears. Do not apply repellent to children's hands. (Children tend to put their hands in their mouths).
- Do not apply repellent to skin under clothing. If repellent is applied to clothing, wash treated clothing before wearing again.

WHEN USING REPELLENTS, ALWAYS FOLLOW THE LABEL DIRECTIONS AND KEEP OUT OF THE REACH OF SMALL CHILDREN (MAY BE TOXIC IF INGESTED).

POISON CONTROL: 1-800-222-1222

A Message Regarding Outdoor Activities/Events:

- Early morning, near dusk, and after dark events may pose a potential risk for you, the children, and other people attending or participating. These are the times when mosquitoes are most likely to feed.
- You can help protect children and others attending outdoor events from West Nile virus infection.
- Eliminate standing, stagnant water – a prime breeding ground for mosquitoes.
- The child care facility director/administrator should talk to local mosquito control officials about pre-event surveillance and control of both larvae and adult mosquitoes.
- Remind those attending an outdoor event about the importance of using DEET repellent products according to the directions on the label and wearing long sleeves and long pants if possible.

A Message For Child Care Facility Directors/Administrators/Staff

- The Internet provides instant access to volumes of information about West Nile virus.
- You can find the latest Mississippi facts about West Nile virus at www.HealthyMS.com.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website also offers information: www.cdc.gov.
- Allowing children outdoors to play poses no greater risk to West Nile virus than if they were outside at home — just be wary of mosquitoes.
- Reduce the mosquito breeding sources — the most effective and economical method toward long-term mosquito control.
- Check for and rid your campus of easily recognized mosquito breeding areas: containers of stagnant water, especially cans near cafeteria exteriors; used tires; gutters; grassy ditches that might harbor standing water. Find **Health Info** and county numbers under Health Department in the BellSouth White Pages.
- Communicate to your staff, the children, and parents to make sure they know how to protect themselves and what you're doing to assure a safe campus.
- Schedule outside events during daylight hours rather than in the evening.
- ***Fight The Bite*** through communication: Keep your staff and families informed and aware.

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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570 East Woodrow Wilson • Post Office Box 1700 • Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1700
(601) 576-7400 • 1-877-WST-NILE or 1-877-978-6453 • www.HealthyMS.com

